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DEPARTMENT OF VISITING NURSING AND SOCIAL WELFARE



IN CHARGE OF
EDNA L. FOLEY, R.N.

TUBERCULOSIS WORK *

By MARY L. EMRIE
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THERE are three nurses engaged in tuberculosis work in connection with the City Dispensary in Cincinnati, two employed by the City Department of Health and one by the Anti-Tuberculosis League. Considering the geographical area and the tuberculosis death rate of Cincinnati, the nurses' hands are all too full. The Health Department, realizing the demand for more workers along this line, admits a financial handicap which prevents the employment of a greater number. In addition to the three nurses, we have with us in the work a cured consumptive, as an assistant, who renders valuable aid to the nurses and at the same time serves as an inspiration to the patient. This feature has been tried in other cities, and we find from our own experience that it works out very satisfactorily.

The work is divided into three classes, viz: dispensary work at daily clinics, instructive and constructive work in the homes, and a large amount of clerical work, arising from the necessary record-keeping relative to each case.

The daily clinics are held from 12 to 2 with a salaried medical director in attendance and one or two volunteer clinicians. One night clinic is held each week for the benefit of working people who would otherwise be deprived of the benefit of the dispensary. All medication is free, where investigation of finances indicates. A throat specialist is in attendance each Wednesday, making gratuitous examination and giving treatment to patients requiring the same. A class has been formed of the more intelligent patients, and one clinic is devoted to

*Five-minute paper read at the September meeting of the Cincinnati Graduate Nurses' Association.

cases where conditions indicate that a response would be obtained from the use of tuberculin; and patients are given treatment accordingly.

On the grounds of the Branch Hospital, the day camp for consumptives was opened the latter part of June and was a notable feature of the summer's work with the tuberculous. This camp was maintained by the Anti-Tuberculosis League. The ambulant cases were provided with car-fare, were met by conveyances at the end of the car line, and thus each morning were given the opportunity of getting away from the congested tenements and the intense heat of the dusty, smoky city into the refreshing green of the country, high on the hill.

After reaching the grounds, the patients were served with milk and crackers. At noon they partook of a meat and vegetable dinner served in a screened dining room, and before returning home in the evening they were again served with some light nourishment. This camp was well provided with tents, cots, hammocks and reclining chairs and was taken advantage of and thoroughly appreciated by many victims of the white plague. Eight of the men patients stayed in camp night and day, and when camp disbanded in September, arrangements were made enabling these men to continue tent life, taking their meals at the Branch Hospital. Great credit reflects on Miss Helbert, as the success of the camp was due to her untiring efforts and able management.

The sociological feature of the work requires much of the nurse's time. The crowded home with its congested sleeping quarters, the meagre income and the injudicious spending of the weekly wage, the complete systematizing of general household affairs are all problems that the nurse must meet and endeavor to solve. The relief work of the dispensary is handled by the Associated Charities, and we feel that much good has come out of the regular bi-monthly meetings between the workers of the charity organizations and the dispensary medical director and nurses. These meetings are given over to discussions of such cases as demand relief, and the same work out much more satisfactorily after our friendly conferences. Often the nurse and agent of the charity organization visit together, and thus work out the family problems. Since January, 1911, the dispensary has handled an average of 335 patients per month.

The general public is keenly aroused to the importance of combating this dread disease. The work along these lines continues to grow, but it will be only in the years to come that there will be a showing of the effort now being put forth.

ITEMS

THE accompanying illustrations have been loaned by the Infant-Welfare Society of Chicago, Minnie H. Ahrens, R.N., Superintendent. Not the least interesting fact about the work of this society is that, while it takes very good care of the babies and their mothers during the hot months of the summer, it looks out for these same mothers and infants during the other ten months of the year, as it believes that two months of instruction to helpless mothers is of little value unless it can be followed up faithfully all the year around. One of the most successful features of the work has been the weekly conferences at the Infant-Welfare Stations for the mothers, and the following quotation from an attractive little folder recently published by the society tells exactly what these conferences are. The figures are interesting as showing the results of work carried along through twelve months of the year.

WHAT A CONFERENCE IS.—It is the coming together of the mothers and babies at an Infant-Welfare Station with a physician and nurse in charge.

To these meetings the mothers bring their babies weekly. The babies are there stripped, weighed by the nurse and examined by the physician. To the conferences are brought not only babies who are furnished with milk by the society, but also breast-fed babies. The mothers are instructed by the physician as to proper diet, regularity of feeding, fresh air, sleep and cleanliness.

REPORT OF WORK

Showing what has been done from January 1 to September 1, 1911

Number of nurses.....	10
Number of stations.....	10
Number of conferences held	448
Total number of babies attending conferences	4,239
Number of deaths of babies under our care for two weeks or more	31, or 2.1 per cent.
Number furnished certified milk and taught home modification	520
Visits made in the homes by the nurses	8,543

The nurses have carried the gospel of proper feeding, fresh air and cleanliness.

If the babies are to be saved, this gospel must be preached 12 months of the year; then when the hot summer months come the babies will have acquired resistance, and the mothers will know how to care for them.

Three new nurses have been added to the staff: Maud Buckland, Michael Reese Hospital; Mary Netzel, St. Mary's Hospital, and Eva Renwick, Illinois Training School.

A RECENT request for literature sent out to many visiting nursing organizations throughout the United States has received a very generous



A MOTHER'S CONFERENCE, CHICAGO COMMONS STATION, CHICAGO INFANT WELFARE SOCIETY.



A GROUP OF MOTHERS AND BABIES, HENRY BOOTH HOME STATION, CHICAGO INFANT WELFARE SOCIETY.



**CHICAGO INFANT WELFARE NURSE TEACHING
HOME MODIFICATION OF MILK.**

response from many societies appealed to. It is hoped that in the December number of the JOURNAL reports from these societies may be given, in order that the tremendous growth of the work during 1910-11 may be realized. To make this department a really co-operative and helpful one, nurses who may find items of interest and help in its columns should remember that they too can help by sending in from time to time newspaper clippings and reports of their work.

THE Annual Conference of the Association for the Study and Prevention of Infant Mortality, to be held in Chicago, November 16 to 18, will undoubtedly attract a great many nurses interested in social and district nursing. Any nurses particularly interested in holding a special meeting, probably a dinner, to welcome to this country the visiting nurses from across the seas are invited to communicate with Edna L. Foley, 105 W. Monroe St., Chicago. The Chicago nurses hope that it may be possible to arrange a dinner at Hull House, and that several nurses, whose names are familiar to all of us, can be induced to speak after the dinner.

MANY traditions with regard to the feeding of tuberculosis patients and with regard to food in general, are given severe blows in a series of articles published in the October number of the *Journal of Outdoor Life*, the official organ of the National Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis.

Dr. John R. Murlin, of New York, Assistant Professor of Physiology at the Cornell University Medical College, holds in an article entitled "The Dynamic Principles of Nutrition," that a consumptive will gain weight and do well on three pints of whole milk, eight ounces of cream, five ounces of milk sugar, six eggs and two slices of buttered toast, as a ration for each 24 hours. The entire diet with the exception of the bread and butter could be prepared in advance and served for a cost of about 50 cents for the day.